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by

Ying Liu

2011

You and Me are Stitched

by

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Report

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The University of Texas at Austin

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of the Requirements

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Master of Fine Arts

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Dedication

To my mother Xiaomao Zhang and my father Guoping Liu.

“Connect nothing.”

~ Leonard Cohen, *Beautiful Losers* (Canada: McClelland and Stewart, 1966)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I haven't been disappointed in my choice to come to The University of Texas at Austin. I really appreciate the classical education in film production I have attained in my time at UT. I already knew that, in order to break the rules, I need know the rules very well. In Don Howard's editing class, Russian Formalism was introduced to break down classic Hollywood film structure. Andrew Shea's First-year Graduate Directing class provided me with a comprehensive view to classical approaches, which I desired to understand and experiment with; it enhanced my ability to see the bigger picture as well.

I also took and audited film history classes whenever I could. Janet Staiger (Film History), Charles Ramirez-Berg (Alternative Poetics), Caroline Frick (1930s American Cinema), and Alison Macor (Independent American Cinema). I took away a lot from every study course I got a chance to sit in on. I understand, to create something, I have to know what has been done and what came before.

I was very fortunate to study with Michael Smith (Performance Art), Bogdan Perzynski (Digital Time Art), Jack Stoney (Advanced Sculpture), and Bill Lundberg (Video Art). These professors enriched my time at UT and encouraged me to widen my filmmaking horizons into art.

Abstract

You and Me are Stitched

Ying Liu, MFA

The University of Texas at Austin, 2011

Supervisor: Andrew Shea

My thesis film for the Master of Fine Arts is a twelve-minute experimental film entitled *You and Me are Stitched*. It follows three friends, Rosine, Sandy and Travis. It is a film that thinks *around* their curious triangle.

This report is an account of the evolution of its filmmaking concept and process, from the initial idea through the finished film. The finished film bears little similarity to the original intent, so I pay particular attention to discussing conceptual breakthrough and post-production discoveries in this report.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Conceptualization	5
Pre-production and Production	12
Editing	13
Conclusion	16
Appendix A: Credits	18
Appendix B: Original Script	20

INTRODUCTION

Or

What is the Shape of Noise?

I was born in 1984, in Zhoushan Island, China during the time that the one-child policy was applied to families in China, starting 1978. Because of that, women, interestingly and ironically enough, started to have a much higher social status. It made families with only girls realize that they should expect and hope for the same futures for their daughters as their sons. I was always told growing up that I had different advantages, if not more or better, than men.

My father taught Physics in college, and now he is a ship-engineering professor. My mother was a nurse and has recently retired. I was always expected to follow them in a scientific profession. My family, like a lot of Chinese families, considered science to be a more competitive, male-dominant discipline, requiring more use of intellect compared to the arts. This seemingly challenging nature had great appeal to my parents. While understandable, this belief is not completely true.

I was very good at physics. Even though there were no good art classes, I always took interest in drawing, so I wanted to study architecture in college. My parents supported the idea but I fell into business and international trading in the end because my

score on the college entrance exam was a few points short of the required score for the architecture program.

In the back of my mind, I was always haunted by a mental image in which I sat on a couch, watching TV shows with flat lighting, retired after thirty years of hard work. The idea of not knowing of what to do with myself frightens me, especially when I saw my parents following that path, as were my grandparents and other relatives. I wondered, in what ways I could expand my interests, so I would not end up on that couch.

After the end of my freshman year, I started getting involved in the alternative music scene at school. At the same time, I was traveling constantly by myself to other cities to see art museums and shows. I was really exploring a lot of possibilities of, to put simply, what I could do with myself.

I snuck into a weekly classical music lecture for two years, offered by the architecture department to architecture students only, taught by a guest lecturer, Zhang Ming. Even though I did not belong there, a strong self-assurance that “in front of knowledge, everyone is equal” calmed me down.

Their reason for having a music lecture series every semester is that “architecture is frozen music”. I did not understand or care what that really meant, or maybe I vaguely

did, but I sensed that if they would go out their way to a drastically different discipline, there must be something special about it.

Because the lectures were meant for drop-in architecture students, some pieces would repeat in the beginning of every semester. I did not mind at all. I sat there taking notes I had taken before but still remained fascinated and puzzled, by what we were doing – for instance, listening to the introduction of *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* repeatedly, and trying to figure out how each phrase was organized, one in relation to another. I did not realize at the time, not until I took Don Howard's First-year Graduate Editing class and, later, Charles Ramirez-Berg's Alternative Poetics class, that I was enlightened by the best thing I could have learned: to understand the form of art is more important than the art!

Now I get it! If architecture is the frozen music, isn't music a structure that flows in time? Zhang Ming introduced me to a valuable idea: you don't need to *feel* anything when listening to classical music but you definitely need to know how to identify introductory phrases, themes, and repeated motifs. He also encouraged me to listen to as wide of a variety of music as I could, as long as it is not the popular kind – “when you see the sea, if you cannot think of up to ten sea motifs, you fail tragically”. How inspiring! Even now, I listen to everything I can. I stopped watching TV completely because I had no time, and I had better things to do.

Sometimes we would go to noise music concerts. This type of music has absolutely no melody. It is just sound, usually made with one or multiple effect pedals. Because of the abstract nature and absence of melody, it provides no escape, or distraction from the pure, extremely loud noises. We were never on drugs. We did not even drink. Going to events sober is not for entertainment, but to honor an act of expression. Are they musicians full of agony? Maybe. But does it matter?

Going to those concerts seems to me now to be a pursuit of knowledge, finding an outlet for new and different experiences. Some of my friends' computers never turned off. They were used to download music, movies, and books that were hard to find, and to share them on the school servers. Chinese students are restless in the cage the Chinese government put them in; they want to see the world beyond the cage and what it has to offer. I never feel regret for the "lack of freedom" I experienced while living in my country. When things are less available, you appreciate them more.

In the time I have been in the US I have found that few people are interested in foreign, or "difficult" movies, despite their easy availability. By difficult, I mean movies not for entertainment only, but that have of some sort of agenda, as far as formal experimentations go. I am a cinéphile. I felt like so many people are way more knowledgeable in movies and film history than I am. But I do watch everything! And I feel everything I have encountered has taught me something.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Or

Where My Initial Ideas Came From

Here are a few things I was thinking about.

- 1) I wanted to make a film that is honest, complex and inspiring. It has to be layered.

I make romance movies, because I dislike a lot of them. I love Francois Truffaut, John Sayles, John Cassavettes, Eric Rohmer, etc, and how they go about the subject of love. But I rarely take interest or find any truth in most straight-up romance films. Why? I find them too easy (in both intellectual and emotional ways), and too painless.

I watched a sixty-minute long animated film, called *What Kind of Manner of Person Art Thou?* (2008) by artist Erin Cosgrove at the Blanton with my performance art professor Michael Smith and classmates, and was very inspired by her layered treatment of materials. Then I went online and watched a lecture she gave at the Hammer Museum in LA, and was inspired again. She quoted from a fiction book she wrote,

“Artists are mere laborers with delusions and grandeur. What do most artists do anyway? They imitate better artists, or worse yet,

copy what other professions do, but poorly. Can't make a movie? Become a video artist! Can't articulate a coherent idea? Toss paint around! Can't act, dance or write? Become a performance artist, and so on... To become a great artist one need only dupe a handful of rich people into buying your work. Bang! The museums and galleries blindly follow, and you are an artist!"

These words were puncturing my heart and urging me not to dilly-dally around, but reflect over and over what I was doing. I can *not* just make *one* thing in order to just “get by” (in this case, to fulfill my degree requirement).

2) I'm interested in something hard to describe. Can I not make representations?

How would loneliness be represented visually? A person eating alone in a restaurant? Or better, person ends up alone on the Moon? And what would be the representation, when it comes to heartbreak? What would it look like if somebody feels jealous, afraid but scared at the same time? How can we be looking at souls, instead of *stuff*?

I went to a screening recently at the Fusebox festival this year. The film, *Waking Things*, portrays members of a religious group's domestic life. I guess it was meant to be spiritual, but the whole movie is full of BEAUTIFUL shots of

characters carrying on some heavy-handed actions with BEAUTIFUL stuff - waving their capes, lying on a velvet pillow, preparing a meal with rustic utensils, etc. It was shot on film, too, so it looked pretty. Is prettiness enough?

Maybe not.

Richard Foreman educates us – it is not a matter of getting HIGHER, DEEPER, BEYOND (These three words were originally capitalized.) than everyday, normal, agreed on culturally-determined reality, it is a matter of – within the confines of the art experience – allowing ourselves to partake of the “taste” of a perceptive mode that strategically subverts the very OBVIOUS (also capitalized originally) aspects of the gross and childish conditioned perception used to “brow beat us” through life. The gross mode of perception that suppresses the contradiction at the heart of each consciously posited “object (= whatever we stumble upon without humanist pre-conceptions. The objects can be an item, an events, an act, or just some “thing”)”. He suggests that we confront the object.

I have to be on the more confrontational side with beauty this time, compared to my pre-thesis. My pre-thesis was shot on black-and-white. It is good looking. The story is satisfying. What can I do to progress on that?

Maybe to start, the set needs to be extremely minimal and *not* rustic looking. I do *not* want to lead the viewers to nostalgia. Let me focus on *now*. Let me think about the *present* for a second. What would it be like for a digital time? Are we going back to representations again? A phone? A laptop? A voicemail?

- 3) My mom has been in love for twenty-seven years. I have never heard any “I love you” said between her and my dad. What is the mystery?
- 4) Should I make a “Chinese” movie? Why not? What is China to me? What are Chinese people like? What is Russian about Tchaikovsky?

My father used to tell me a story about a piece of lard. During a time of many natural disasters, he remembers my grandmother brought back a piece of lard and made it into a super thin porridge. Even now, he remembers the flavor and warmth still lingering at the corner of his mouth. To him, difficulties and traumas in life can be simply sweetened by a tiny scoop of lard. To me, that is something about China, a country with such major (good or bad) changes every ten years. It is such hope and optimism rather than self-victimization that unite families and support people spiritually.

I think all my movies have been very “Chinese”. Does it matter, if Chinese people are not represented in the works? I really do not think so. Tchaikovsky is played

by Symphonies all over China. His music is embedded with a lot Russianness, as they say but people all across the world can understand its sensibility.

5) How can I avoid just giving “a message”?

You and Me are Stitched is not a political movie but it does have a political agenda. Nothing is pronounced heavy-handedly: homosexuals kiss, a black and white people share the same bed. Cultural differences are illusions. Emphasis or comparisons made on racial, social, class, cultural *differences* can be problematic segregation, whether it was done intentionally or not.

A great of number of works were tragically reduced to lifeless representations of stereotypes, instead of inquires of the unknown. The danger in such representation lies in its *generality*. Isn't an ethnic failed drug dealer a *specific* enough topic? Not really, in most cases. The audience is so trained that they make the easiest associations and identifications possible.

What can be the solutions?

The qualities we human beings share, human nature, should be pronounced more, and even more! That is something that leads us down the road to equality. No race is more special, even exotic tribes (Romantics would say). It does not matter what

different food we eat, or what different utensils we use. In the perspective of anthropology, it is certainly valuable. I do not deny that at all. But doesn't it mean something that we all cry when we are extremely upset?

When it comes to movies, the viewers have somehow self-trained to be so passive that they are hardly inclined to go out their way to *think*. Therefore, as filmmakers we need to do extra work to *make* them think. If a maker is passive, without making inquires to whatever he is making, the viewers would just be even more passive.

Here is what I tried to do with this film.

- 1) I did not give my characters occupations. Without an occupation (part of the attachment to reality), I remove my picture from social structure, class and other distractions, so that it focuses on nature and human nature.
- 2) People in the film are driven only by their human instincts, physical and emotional. Emotion is externalized and exaggerated. Subtext floats on the surface.

Sandy smells an armpit and finds her true love. This instinct causes her period start. Rosine's heartbreak leads to headache. It is not even a physical movie about love. It has nothing to do with physical love, either. It is just a physical movie.

3) It is full of moral ambiguity. In my film world, there are no socially agreed upon, moral “standards”, introduced or even suggested. Human interactions are described, but absolutely not judged.

4) Can I introduce a different form? What would that be?

My question was: do I have to be removed to be able to experiment with forms? I want to give it a try.

I am a huge fan of Milan Kundera. All I want to understand about life is what it means and what seems meaningful actually means nothing. How should I live and from what perspective I should look at life? Making movies is making documentation and inquiries of my life.

I want to know where my agony comes from. I want to understand my physicality. I want an explanation of my pain, disillusion, frustrations and problems, like everyone else does.

PRE-PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTION:

Or

Catherine & Tim are Awesome and I Went a Bit Nuts

I had terrific producers. I self-produced my 881KA class project and my pre-thesis film. This time, I had two very responsible and hardworking people on board, considering the scale of the project. Timothy Edwards, a fellow student two years after me, and Catherine DeMartino, a student of mine from a class I TA'ed, did a wonderful job helping me piece things together. Tim Tsai, who had AD'ed my last two films, stayed on board assisting me. It took two months for me to cast and to get everything ready.

I did feel insecure for most of the shoot because I could not tell if I was in control – it had been a year since shooting *Happy Tragic Death*, the last film I directed. I was very self-conscious about my direction. I was also worried about some technical aspects, which I should be not have been concerned with at all. It seemed like I was letting other people make the important decisions in an attempt to appease their sensibilities rather than making the film I had envisioned.

Now that I look back, the footage I captured worked. All the acting was done in a very loose way. I had imagined emotional beats which their deadpan performance didn't satisfy. I realized that I just needed to be flexible, rather than imposing my "initial intention" on the captured footage.

EDITING:

Or

What Do I Do with All This Footage?

When a movie is shot, it is *there*. But I feel I am *new* every minute. Seeing, hearing and absorbing new things non-stop alters my idea about what moviemaking is. How can I catch up with my thoughts? Can I be as dynamic? So my art can have some life?

I worked at least eight hundred hours on this film. I structured it. Shattered it. Restructured it. Beat it into powder. Took it down again. Rebuilt it. I knew I had to be alert, had to be sober. I knew that would be the only way to maintain the nature of inquiries.

I found that Eric Rohmer was not in me. So I discarded almost all the dialog I had. Anti-mainstream is always in me. Is Godard in me? He confronted the filmmaking tradition sixty years ago, can I do the same now? Don Howard encourages me, “why not?”

But confront what? The fourth wall? How can I not sound smart or overly apologetic? After a couple of different experimentations, it came to me that all my text concerning the fourth wall did not actually work for the picture, because it was not shot

in a way that was specifically designed to break the fourth wall. Then I tried a version with my singing and narration added to the picture, to move the maker into the foreground and the process more transparent. This structure did not pan out, either.

Foreman says, let the art become a machine, running on its own fuels, rather than the audience's fuel. What form would fit my movie? How could I find it?

By listening? Let me listen to the materials I have got! If there is no direct role model, I should not waste my time, which could be used to *talk* to my footage, looking for a safe landing. I *listened* to each clip I had, because they talk to me! Before, all the river clips were scattered throughout the piece, now they are all together. Something clicked in my mind. One night, I was lying in bed, I had an idea: why don't I try put all the same location footage together and see what happens. Boom! It worked!

So, my characters spoke to me. I bundled the three characters into a *unit*, to confront the audience's traditional viewing habit. In the original script, the two girls are equally favored but in the editing, I felt it fit to follow a group activity rather than an individual's motivation and I kept it. It somehow preserves that irony better. On the other hand, I understand that every single character was created by me. Each of them resembles me in a different aspect, even in the slightest way. It makes sense to bundle them.

At the beginning, the narrative was always kept in the piece. I kept shuffling things around but then I landed at a point that I realized the way to keep *this* film truthful was to completely discard the concrete narrative. If concrete, it is dead. There would be no other dimensions for it to live in.

I realized that I had to be a painter! Instead of simply piecing things together. I had to add something and take something away! So the film stays active. So the audience stays active.

CONCLUSION

Or

What Did I Finally Discover About My Picture During Editing?

I discovered clusters.

I discovered the randomness of grouping: your father might have met your mother at a coffee shop, they started dating and then they had you. People do seek out those relationships. Even just three people, like the characters Rosine, Sandy, and Travis, there are many geometrical configurations. RST, RS, RT, ST, R, S, T. There is also instinct and sub-consciousness for coupling/mating for reproductive purposes (don't forget we are animals), need for friendships and mutual support.

Moreover, how did I land on exploiting the karaoke form finally in the editing?

Here are a few reasons.

1. The purpose of karaoke is for people to sing along with the songs that they already know. In this film, the viewers are forced into a situation with a melody that they are un-prepared for.

2. Sing-alongers are inclined to project their personality and emotions on their interpretation of the song. In this film, the text is told in the first-person perspective, to invite consensus and identification, even though sometimes the text misleads.
3. I made the music. It is mono-toned and flat, which suggests viewers' possible familiarization, but the chance is still quite slim.
4. Film is essentially a medium for viewing images silently and passively, rather than active thinking. Karaoke is also a form for inactive thinking, even though it involves reading the lyrics of the song. Interestingly enough, the combination of both, on the contrary, pushes and pulls the viewers to make choices constantly, to look at the image or read the text, to believe what the "lyrics" tells them or try to construct a narrative using the image, or both.
5. This combination of forms suggests density and a pursuit of clarity.

All in all, what above is what I learned from the process of making *You and Me are Stitched*. This picture takes a long journey and lands in form that finally holds its curious findings.

Appendix A: Credits

Brianna McKeague
Paula Brooks
Shade Vaughn
in

-----2-----
Written, Directed by
Ying Liu

Assisted by
Tim Tsai

-----3-----
with
Kacy Maddux
Brenna Forsyth

Featuring Voice of
Scott Eastwood

-----4-----
Produced by
Tim Edwards
Catherine DeMartino

Line Producers
Beth Chatelain
Catherine Licata

-----5-----
1st Unit Camera
Huay-Bing Law

2nd Unit Camera
Tim Edwards

Assisted by
Evan Ho
Taylor Peterson
Hammad Rizvi

Lighting
Justin Feng
Hua Liu
Paavo Hanninen
Roshan Murthy

Assisted by
Roy Rutngamlug
Jo Huang

Sound
Andrew Huber
Monique Walton

Assisted by
Bruce Li
Bereket Tekeste
Jo Huang

Sound Design
Aaron Malzahn

Sound Re-recordist
Eric Friend

Music
Ying Liu

Art
Ying Liu

Makeup
Charli Brath

Catering
Ben Kullerd
Jason Wohlfahrt

-----6-----
Editing and After Effects
Ying Liu

Post-Production Supervisor
Susanne Kraft

Color Correction
Dan Stuyck
-----6-----

Thank you:

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Charmarie Burke
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Gloria Holder
Don Howard
Susanne Kraft
Andrew Kuck
Anne Lewis
Guoping Liu
Geoff Marslett
Ming's Café
Charles Ramirez-Berg
Erin Randall
Ruby's Barbecue
Nancy Schiesari
Andrew Shea
Michael Smith
Janet Staiger
Paul Stekler
Jack Stoney
Xiaomao Zhang

YOU AND ME ARE STITCHED

1 INT. TAOS/ROOM - DAY 1

Sandy rolls her luggage into an empty room. She sits down on a bed with no sheets. She tries to smell the air in the room.

2 INT. ROSINE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 2

Rosine and Travis sit in recliners drinking beer.

ROSINE

I have to say that heartbreak is real. It's said to be fictional, to be something in your head. But it's not. It's very physical.

TRAVIS

And very painful.

ROSINE

Right. It's definitely some sort of physical pain. The first time I realized I was in love with Zack, was when I looked at him, and then the lower left corner of my head hurt. Here. This part hurt really bad.

She points.

TRAVIS

You never told me about that before. Sounds intense.

ROSINE

It is.

TRAVIS

I don't like physical pain.

ROSINE

No one does.

TRAVIS

Then just live without it.

ROSINE

What do you mean?

TRAVIS

Don't fall in love.

ROSINE

But love is like a plant. It grows inside of you. If it continues to grow, it fills up one room and then it has to take up two.

TRAVIS

That doesn't make sense. If the other person's love is ever as strong as yours, his plant grows and grows, It also needs to take up two rooms.

ROSINE

Plants are just an awful metaphor. But you get what I'm saying, don't you? All I'm saying is that if there's too much love in you, unshared, you may explode.

TRAVIS

What's after the explosion?

ROSINE

It starts over again from a seed. But as I said it's a bad metaphor.

TRAVIS

The thing I don't get is why you treat all your relationships like the very first one?

3 INT. TAOS/ROOM - NIGHT 3

Sandy lies in a bed with no sheets. Her suitcase remains unopened. She tosses around in bed. She cannot fall asleep.

Sandy pulls out an air refresher and sprays.

4 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - NIGHT 4

Rosine sleeps.

5 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - NIGHT 5

Dream.

ROSINE

The back of my head hurts.

TRAVIS
Try to bang your forehead against
the wall. You may feel better.

ROSINE
Yeah?

Rosine hits her forehead against the wall in a corner of the
room. Travis is aside.

ROSINE (CONT'D)
It still hurts.

TRAVIS
Then there's no cure for your
headache. Live with it, bye.

6 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - NIGHT 6

She wakes up.

ROSINE
Why don't I feel better?

7 EXT. GUADALUPE RIVER - DAY 7

Rosine and Travis tube on the river. She throws a big orange
juice bottle at him. He catches it and drinks from it.

In the distance, Sandy's tube comes into the frame. Rosine
sees her. She paddles towards Sandy with her hands. After
Rosine reaches Sandy, Travis catches up with them.

8 EXT. GUADALUPE RIVER - DAY 8

Rosine, Sandy and Travis dry off.

Rosine embraces Sandy and does not let go for a long time.

9 INT. TAOS/ROOM - NIGHT 9

Sandy cannot fall asleep. She tosses around in bed.

10 EXT. TAOS/PARKING LOT 10

Sandy yawns waiting.

Rosine pulls in. Sandy gets in.

11 EXT. VARIOUS STREETS - DAY 11

Rosine's car runs on the street.

ROSINE
Sorry it's taking so long.

SANDY
Where are we going?

ROSINE
We're gonna get Travis first. The
boy from the river. Remember? Do
you mind?

SANDY
No. That's fine.

ROSINE
You'll like him. He's funny.

SANDY
Is he your boyfriend?

ROSINE
No, not really.

12 EXT. VARIOUS STREETS - NIGHT 12

Rosine's car runs on the street. It seems Travis' place is
very far.

SUBTITLE: TWO DAYS LATER

13 EXT. TRAVIS' HOUSE/DRIVEWAY- DAY 13

Rosine's car pulls into the parking lot. In the distance,
Travis runs towards them.

14 EXT. CAFE - DAY 14

The three of them finish up lunch.

Rosine's phone rings. She gets up.

ROSINE
Excuse me. I'll be right back.

She leaves.

Silence between Sandy and Travis.

SANDY
So you like scabs.

TRAVIS
Yeah. I pick at them and eat them.

SANDY
Let me know next time when you do.

TRAVIS
It's kinda private.

SANDY
Do you share anything at all?

TRAVIS
Occasionally.

On the other side of the patio. Rosine talks on the phone.

ROSINE
Zack, you finally called! I miss
you!

ZACK
(o.s.)
Hi Rosine, I listened to some of
your messages. Sorry for the late
response but I just don't think
it's a good idea to continue what
we had. I had to call to end this.
I'm sorry. Take care.

Rosine cries.

15 EXT. ROSINE/APT DOWNSTAIRS. 15

Performance.

CAMERA pans from left to right. Rosine extends her right arm
out.

CAMERA pans from right to left. Rosines extends her left arm
out.

16 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - NIGHT 16

Travis and Rosine fall asleep in bed together.

17 INT. TAOS ROOM - NIGHT 17

Sandy cannot sleep.

18 EXT. GUADALUPE RIVER - DAY 18

Rosine, Travis and Sandy tube.

Rosine gets in the water from her tube. She swims a little bit and then floats face down. Almost still.

She floats. Tubes get more distant from where she is.

TRAVIS

Ro! That's enough. Come back!

Rosine still floats by herself.

SANDY

Rosine!

Travis swims to her. Rosine finally responds. She swims back with Travis and hops on her own tube.

ROSINE

Sorry. Just wanted to feel the water for a little bit.

19 INT. ROSINE/LIVING ROOM - DAY 19

They get back from tubing.

TRAVIS

It's hot in here.

ROSINE

I know. I know. Hold on.

Rosine turns on the AC.

TRAVIS

Make it really cold please.

ROSINE

K, mister.

Travis walks to the bedroom.

TRAVIS

I need a nap.

ROSINE
Sandy, want a nap?

SANDY
I'm okay. Maybe in a little while.

ROSINE
I'm so sleepy. It feels so weird.
We were just relaxing the whole
time. Now we need to relax even
more.

20 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - DAY 20

Rosine walks into her bedroom. Travis lies in bed on his stomach. She joins him.

ROSINE
(to Sandy in the hall)
There's room if you want a nap,
too. I can't wait to lie down.

Sandy follows her in. She sees her lying down to Travis's right. She walks back to the living room.

21 INT. ROSINE/LIVING ROOM - DAY 21

Sandy sits in a recliner. It seems quiet. It still feels hot, so she gets up to turn up the AC and sits back down.

22 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - DAY 22

Sandy walks back into the bedroom. She sees Rosine lying on her stomach on top of Travis. It looks like a burger. The mattress and Rosine are the buns. Travis is the patty.

Travis withdraws himself slowly. Then he climbs on top of Rosine. Rosine becomes the patty. It becomes a quiet and playful game. Travis is the patty again. Then Rosine. Then Travis.

ROSINE
I like this game.

Sandy walks out.

23 INT. ROSINE/LIVING ROOM - DAY 23

Sandy stands by the heating unit on the wall.

24 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - DAY 24

Sandy's imagination:

She climbs on top of Rosine, who is on top of Travis. All of them lie on their stomachs. Rosine withdraws herself and climbs on top of Sandy. They take turns quietly being the patty.

25 INT. ROSINE/LIVING ROOM - DAY 25

Sandy moves and walks in the Bedroom.

26 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - DAY 26

The brief game is over. Travis and Rosine lie in bed separately. Sandy goes to lie down, on the left.

27 EXT. CAFE - DAY 27

Sandy and Travis stand under a tree. Each of them hold a number for a table. Travis lifts his arm. Sandy puts her nose in his armpit. Two females make out in the background.

SANDY AND TRAVIS

I know you. You're the one I've
been waiting for.

She starts tearing up her table number and eating the torn paper. She hands the torn paper to Travis, and he eats it.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. GUADALUPE RIVER - DAY 28

Travis keeps the same pose as in the last scene, standing on the bank. Rosine comes out from behind.

CLOSE ON: Rosine

CUT TO:

29 EXT. POOL - DAY 29

Sandy sinks her head in the water. She smells the air.

SANDY

Now it's gone.

Her head rises above the water.

SANDY (CONT'D)
Here it is.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. CAFE - A FEW DAYS AGO 30

TRAVIS
The true mystery of the world is
the visible, not the invisible.
It's shallow not to judge by
appearances.

31 INT. TAOS ROOM - DAY - A FEW DAYS AGO 31

Sandy is on her laptop. She types in google: THE TRUE MYSTERY
OF THE WORLD SHALLOW WILDE. She reads.

SANDY
It is only shallow people who do
not judge by appearances. The true
mystery of the world is the
visible, not the invisible.

32 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER 32

Sandy wakes up finding her face in Travis's armpit. Travis is
still asleep in the middle.

She turns her face away from Travis's armpit. Away from
Travis and Rosine.

Sandy sneezes.

Rosine elevates herself.

ROSINE
Are you awake?

SANDY
Yeah. It's getting cold. Are you
cold?

ROSINE
No, not really, but you can turn it
down if you want.

Sandy gets up to turn down the AC. Then she walks into the
restroom. FLUSHING.

She comes back.

SANDY
I started my period. Can I...?

ROSINE
Sure. My stuff's in the little bin
in the bathroom. Help yourself.

Rosine points.

SANDY
Thanks.

She leaves for the bathroom.

Sandy comes back. She lies back down.

Rosine elevates herself, so that she can talk to Sandy.

ROSINE
(to Sandy)
I had a strange headache so I
started banging my forehead against
the wall.

TRAVIS
The same dream?

Travis is actually awake.

ROSINE
Yeah.

TRAVIS
Was I in it again?

ROSINE
Yeah. This time after you told me I
was hopeless, you left.

33 INT. ROSINE/KITCHEN - DUSK 33

Rosine grabs a few beer bottles from the fridge.

34 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - DUSK 34

Rosine walks back to the room. Travis is up, too.

The three drink beer.

ROSINE

I knew something was wrong, but I just went with it and thought things might get better. There was one day, Zack texted me and said: GO SEE THE MOON. IT IS HUGE. I went up to the roof. The moon was really big. It was orange and was getting bigger little by little, like a balloon. So I wanted to tell him. I was leaning against the edge of the roof and I happened to look down to the street. And I saw him. He was holding somebody else's hand, walking along the street. I was so sad I couldn't move. Then guess what I saw? A shooting star! A really tiny, shiny star blinked across the sky from left to right. I started crying and praying to the star, "Please give me love and happiness. All I want is to be loved. Completely or not at all." Then I prayed even more. I was confused, too, isn't a shooting star supposed to go by like "shoo"? Then I realized it might just be a plane.

Beat.

ROSINE (CONT'D)

Right at that moment, a real shooting star, so big, so unexpectedly, bright as fireworks...

She lets Travis hold her beer. She gets off the bed quickly. She mimics the shooting star: she squats down in the other end of the bedroom. Then she raises her arm and her body, and runs across the bedroom. She drops her hand to the floor.

ROSINE (CONT'D)

It fell just like that.

SANDY

Did you pray?

ROSINE

No. I didn't have time to think. I couldn't think. My wishes became so unimportant and small. After it was gone, I said to the moon, "Take me."

TRAVIS

My mom loved a song very much when I was very little. It's called "I Walk and the Moon Walks with Me". The song stuck in my mind. I used to hate it. But now I realize how brilliant she was. The song goes, "I walk and the moon walks with me. There is me, the moon and my shadow."

35 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

35

Travis and Rosine sleep facing the same direction. Sandy is awake. She faces the opposite direction from them.

She gets up. She opens Rosine's closet and put on her jackets.

Sandy gets back to bed. Still facing the opposite direction. But then, she turns around to hold Travis' waist.

Sandy withdraws her hands from Travis's waist. Instead she drags Travis's tank-top to her side, little by little. Until Travis notices it. Until he lets go of Rosine. Until he turns over and faces her.

36 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

36

Rosine wakes up. She elevates herself and sees Travis holding Sandy.

ROSINE

(quietly)

Sandy.

Sandy does not respond. Rosine walks out of the bedroom.

37 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

37

Rosine walks back in quietly.

ROSINE

Sandy. I don't get it. What is it, between you and Travis? I've tried very hard to understand my own frustration and pain. I want to comprehend dreams, mine, or even yours. But now I suddenly realize that maybe what's really incurable is just solitude, rather than pain.

(MORE)

ROSINE (CONT'D)
 Like how I feel right now in a
 familiar place like this. I've made
 a wish to a wrong star. Can I ever
 go back and start over again?

She puts her hand on Sandy's head. Sandy has a fever.

38 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - DAY 38

Sandy lies in bed alone.

39 INT. ROSINE/LIVING ROOM - DAY 39

Travis comes to visit.

TRAVIS
 How's she? Can I see her?

ROSINE
 She's better, but she's little
 warm. Yeah, you can go in.

He goes in the bedroom and closes the door.

Rosine is alone in her recliner.

40 EXT. POOL - DAY 40

Rosine tubes alone in the pool.

41 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - DAY 41

Sandy tries to get out of bed.

CUT TO:

42 EXT. POOL - DAY 42

Sandy slides into the water.

CUT TO:

43 INT. ROSINE/BEDROOM - DAY 43

Sandy falls on the floor.

ROSINE

(v.o.)

Sandy's fever lasted for more than a month. After about two weeks, I had to send her back home to get treated by her family doctor. Her fever subsided a few days after she got home. She never came back again.

44 EXT. POOL - DAY

44

Travis jumps in the pool. Alone.

45 INT. A BAR - DAY

45

Jacob sings. The three listen.

JACOB

And the snow fell,/ And the wind
blew,/ And you knew,/ and you
knew./ Oh the bed was cold,/ So I
kissed you,/ And you knew, and you
knew./ I sure thought I was a
smarty,/ But then I fell for all
your tricks,/ No there were no
strings on me,/ But now you and me
are stitched./ And I tried to say I
was a dreamer,/ I never kept the
things I knew,/ But if I ever was
alone again,/ All I'd dream about
is you.